

Day 8
The weapon of meekness...

Matthew 5:5 (NIV) Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

This Radical Rabbi named Jesus, has made two statements that has His audience reeling. Especially once they considered the implications of it; *"You are spiritually bankrupt and you need God. Your comfort can only come from the Heavenly Father and that comfort is only available to those who recognize their poverty and weep over their sin."* Jesus is dispensing truth in such a rapid fashion that His audience' gasp is almost audible through the pages of the writing of Matthew. If they thought the first two statements were mind blowing, the third must have bewildered, confused and alarmed them. What did Jesus say that was so perplexing? Jesus is making the most culture contradicting statement ever uttered. Not just for those who were listening to Him, but also for all cultures that would follow. What does He say?

"Blessed are the meek." Wait, what?! Did we hear that right? That thought must have been racing through the minds of the mountain climbing listeners. Why? Because their thoughts about the word meekness, are not very far removed from our understanding of it. Here are some of our modern day dictionary definitions of the word meekness: *"Resigned, gentle, quiet, shy, retiring, reverent, peaceable, docile, lamblike, mild, demure, modest, humble, lowly, diffident, unassuming, self-effacing, unpretentious, unambitious, unobtrusive, submissive, yielding, unresisting, compliant, tame, biddable, tractable, acquiescent, deferential, weak, timid, frightened, spineless, spiritless, unprotesting, like a lamb to the slaughter; weak-kneed and wimpish."*

Who wants to be known as a spineless, shy, frightened, spiritless, weak and weak-kneed wimp? Is that what Jesus was saying to them and to us? Not even close, not even in the same stratosphere. **Our problem, just like theirs, is the fact that we have equated meekness with weakness.** We completely miss the point, and therefore miss out on one of the most powerful weapons in the arsenal of a Christ follower. Yes, you read that right. Meekness is a weapon. I will venture to take it even further, **meekness is the most identifiable character trait, whereby we show that we are followers of Jesus!** If your thoughts about meekness is weakness, you need to ask the Holy Spirit to permanently demolish that warped concept from your mind. Meekness is not weakness, but we seem to think it is. Why is that?

Nobody wants to be known as weak. We want to be known as strong, powerful and forceful. Because it is the strong and powerful who are successful. According to us, the meek do not inherit the earth, the powerful inherits the earth and the successful will rule the world. So, that is how we perceive that we will be blessed. Yet, Jesus says the complete opposite: ***"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."***

How can the meek inherit the earth? Everything we observe around us seems to point to those who are powerful and forceful. It is to them that the spoils go. Think about how truly earth shattering this statement was to those listening to Jesus. They were used to being subjugated. If they were not placed in submission by their religious leaders, they sure were put in their place by the Roman occupiers. These were not kind rulers. Just the opposite, they were ruthless, heartless, brutal with very little mercy. Cross Rome and you could end up on a cross. Cross the religious leaders, at best you would be ostracized and put out of the temple, at worst, you could be stoned.

Jesus making a statement like this, seems laughable. I mean everybody knows, it is brute force that wins the day. It is displays of power that conquer the world. If you truly want something, you have to take it. So, how is it possible for meekness to be a strength? The Greek word for meekness literally means **“strength or power under control.”** It is a picture of a wild stallion that still has every bit of power and strength it possessed while being wild, but now its strength is brought under control. It is strength that can be trusted, it is strength that is usable. **When we are meek, it means we have submitted all of our strength under the authority of Christ, and we will only respond to the One who holds the reins of our lives!**

In order to have meekness, you have to be strong. According to Jesus, the meekest amongst us is the strongest and those who are strong are meek. What does that look like? Meekness enables a person to place the outcome of all situations in God’s Hands, and to trust Him to make everything just, in the end. Meekness means we fight God’s way, not ours. That is exactly what Paul is appealing that we do in **2 Corinthians 10:1-3(NRSV)** *I myself, Paul, appeal to you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold toward you when I am away!— 2 I ask that when I am present I need not show boldness by daring to oppose those who think we are acting according to human standards. 3 Indeed, we live as human beings, but we do not wage war according to human standards.*

Paul appeals to the Corinthians on the very foundation of the meekness and gentleness of Christ. He then reminds them that, although we are human beings(obviously), like others, the way we fight is not according to human standards. That is exactly what Jesus was saying to His audience on the Mount. You have been taught that the way to possess something or to have anything of value is to fight by using force. But I am telling you; it is the meek, the humble, meaning those who fight My way, the way I will show them to fight. They will inherit the earth.

What war are you waging in your life? What are you trying to possess or obtain? It could be a just thing or even a just cause for yourself or for others, but you must make sure that you are fighting with the greatest weapon in your spiritual arsenal, the weapon of meekness. Have you brought and submitted your strength under the Lordship of Christ? If not, why not? True blessedness Jesus says, is found in power under control. It is found in submitting your strength to Him and allowing Him to determine the outcome. In that previous statement, lies a truth we have to embrace and a radical way of living we have to engage. It all hinges on trust.

Would you trust to fight God’s way, by meekness, humility and grace? If that scares you, remember what Jesus said: **“And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.” (Matthew 19:29-30)**

It might seem that those who are meek are on the losing end. But according to Jesus, those who seem to be winning are actually losing and those who are willing to lose for His sake will end up taking first place.

Are you willing to be meek?

Reflection and Prayer:

- **Have you ever thought of meekness as a weapon? If not, why not?**

- **What are you afraid of losing out on if you embrace a lifestyle of meekness? (Be honest with yourself)**
- **Why do we struggle to live out what Jesus said about meekness, especially knowing that He promised it would be the meek that will inherit the earth?**
- **Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you throughout this week not to miss any opportunities to walk in meekness towards others.**